

A PREPARATIVE
SERMON,

TO THE LORDS TABLE,

preached by the Reverend Mr.

John Forbes, Pastour to the

Companie of Marchant

Adventurers residing

in Delft.

1. Cor. 11. 28.

*But let a man examine himself, and so
let him eate of that bread, and
drinke of that Cup.*



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A PREPARATIVE 3
SERMON,
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TABLE.

John 6. Vers. 27.

Labour not for the meat, which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth, unto everlasting life, which the Sonne of man shall giue unto you, for him hath God the Father sealed.

A Monge our manifold enormities, there is not any one, which more grieues the Lord Iesus, and which doth make him more to be offended with vs, then when we abuse, either himsele, or his blessed ordinances to peruerse ends: therefore of all things whereunto, wee are to looke to, in our
A 2 selues,

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selues, this is one of the chiefeſt, leaſt
in ſheve of ſeeking after Chriſt, &
in comming to his holy ordinances,
vve thereby increaſe our guiltines, &
prouoke the Lord to vvrath, and in-
dignation againſt vs.

VVe knowv vvhath fearefull iudg-
ments the Corinthians did bring
vpon themſelues, for not eating the
Lords ſupper, as they ought. For
vvhich abuſe of that holy ordinan-
ce, the Lord plagued them, vwith
ſundry diſeaſes, and ſickneſſes, and
diuerſe kinds of deaths: ſo zealous is
the Lord, of keeping his holy ordi-
nances, from the abuſe, & contempt
of men. See 1. Cor chap. 11.

VVe are not ignorant alſo of the
ſeueritie vſed by God, againſt *Nadab*,
and *Abihu*, the Sonnes of *Aaron*, for
offring of ſtrang fire before the Lord,
in conſuming them both vwith fire
that

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that came out from the Lord, see *Leuit. 10.*

The like example haue vvee of the testimonie of Gods anger, against *Vzzah* (as example to all them, that vse not the holy things of God aright nor respectfully) vvho presuming contrary to the ordinance of God, to touch the Arke. Though vpo a good zeale, to stay it vvhen he did see it like to fall, vvas stricken to death by the Lord.

Let vs remember vvhat the Lord did to king *Vziab*, for attempting to enter in to the sanctuary, to offer incense before the Lord, vvwhich belonged only to the Priest to doe, in striking him vvith a leprosie all the daies of his life, *2.Chro. cap. 26.*

Ananias and *Saphirah* are documents to this day of the Lords sore displeasure against all those, vvho

pretending faith, loue, and zeale, and liberalitie to Christ, and his Church, dealt hipocriticallie vvith counterfeite shevve, and not trulie vvith God, in any thing, concerning his vvorship, his glory, his ordinances, and his obedience. vvho both of them vvere puniſhed by death, for dealing falselie vvith the Lord, in their prophane, & counterfeite shevve, of imitating the charitable liberalitie of the Primitiue Churches, in selling their possessions, and bringing the price thereof to the Apostles feet, for the support of those that did vvant. See *Act. 5.*

All these do let vs see, that the Lord can not abide, that any man should prophane, any of his holy ordināces, or for any by-pretēce to make shevv, of zeale to his glorie, or desire of his holy things: it is not possible, that

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hee should suffer vs to goe long unpunished, if vve doe not serue him in all his ordinances vvith sincere, & vpright hearts. The truth vvhereof is confirmed by this Historie: For these lewes comming vnto Christ, did make a great shevve, and desire, to enjoy the blessed fellowvship, and communion of the Sonne of God: & yet Christ is displeased vvith them, because they sought him not vvith vpright hearts: therfore hauing checked, and reprovved them, in manifesting, and opening the poyson of hypocrisie, which was in their hearts, in the preceding verse of this chapter: In this verse vvich vve haue nowv read, hee laboureth to cure by vvholesome medecine, the sicknes of their soule, if possible the peruerse disposition of their hearts could be reformed.

The euill that he reprobues in them is this, that they sought not after Christ aright: because they did not set before themselves, the right vse of Christ in comming vnto him. They should haue sought after him, first, and principallie, for spirituall things, tending to the velfare of their soules, but they sought after him for nothing but the foode of their bodies, and the velfare of this their transitorie life: therefore Christ is offended at them, & so hee is vvith all others, vvho following their footsteps, come vnto him, or his ordinances in the like manner.

Nowv to remedie this euill, the Sonne of God, labours to giue them some vvhole some instruction, in which, these points are to be marked. First, *VVhat it is that he enioynes them to? vvhich is to labour.* Secondly, For
vvhat

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What he will haue them to labour, & that is for spirituall things, namely, the meate of their soules, and the food of eternall life. Thirdly, wee haue to consider, the preparation vnto this, by remouing the hindrances hereof, in repressing the loue of the world in mens hearts. Commanding them not to labour for that meate which perisheth. Fourthly, we haue heere set downe by Christ, an information, & an instruction vwhere to finde this bread of life, since it were in vaine to labour for it, if we knew not vwhere to find it. Therefore hee tells them the Sonne of man shall giue it vnto them. Fifthly, Here is set downe an argument, or reason of confirmation to make this good, and to secure the soule of him, that seeks this bread of life from Christ, that Christ is able, yea not only able, but also willing, and ready to giue it vnto them,

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and.

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and that is set downe in these
vvords, for him hath God the Father
sealed.

First then let vs speake of the exhortation vvhich is to labour for that meat, vvhich endureth to eternall life.

By this exhortation vve see manifestly, that it neuer vvas the purpose, nor mind of God, since the vvorld beganne, that men should feede on any meat, either corporall, or spirituall, vvithout labour, and pains taking for it: you knowv, that lavve of the Apostle to the *Thes.* the second *Epist.* 3. chap. vers. 10. *If there be any that vvill not vvorke, the same man shall not eate*: that man therefore shall neuer be vvorthie of heauen, that vvill take no paines for it, for if it be Gods vvill, that vvee should labour, if vve vvould enioy the food
of

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of our bodies: it must needs be much more his vwill, that yvee should labour for the food of our soules. It is therefore in vaine for men euer to looke to be made pertakers of the supper of the lambe, and bread of heauen, if they vwill take no paines for it, there is an necessitie layd vpon vs to labour, for the food, both of soule, and bodie: it is no slothfull, nor careles man that God vwill feed: such men therefore as thinke, to goe, to heauen sleeping, vwithout seeking after heauen, and doe hope to haue Christ brought vnto them, vwhile they rest in their beds, and vwill not doe so much, as to rise, and let him in, vwhen he calles, and knocks at their doores, and looke to be fed vwith the food of Angels, and yet vwill not stir hand, nor foote to labour for it.

I say

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I say such men can neuer expect, to haue it from God. VVe knowv it sufficiently, that it is Gods vvill, and ordinance, that touching this temporall life, a man should eate his bread in the sweate of his browves, & vve doe vvillingly vndergoe paine, & labour for it: But here is all our fault, that howvsoeuer vve be busied, and pained for temporall things, belonging to this life: yet vve haue neither heart nor mind to take any paines for spirituall things. And this is one of the greatest finnes of this miserable age, vvhere in men are so diligent, & laborious, for the things of this life, and yet so careles, & miserable negligent in things concerning eternall life. VVell this vve say, (& that truly) the greater diligence men vse, & the more paines they take about vvorldly businesse: the greater shalbe there conviction,

conviction, and their iudgment the more terrible, in the daie of Christ his appearing: If they haue not beene much more painfull about spirituall things, vvhich do concerne eternall life. V Ve shall heare here after vvhath need vve haue to vveane our selues from the cares of this vworld, and of earthly things: because it is the maine hinderance, and let, of our care, and solicitude for heavenly things, and therefore it must be first rooted out of the heart, before the heart can be set as it ought vpon spirituall things.

But nowv let vs consider vvhath is cōprehended vnder this word *Labour*, and vvhath are the things, that the Son of God requires of vs, to be done for the attaining to this bread of life. Christ himself here after in the same chapter shewes this, in answering the Ievves question, vvhether they
asked

asked him, *vvh*at shall *vve* doe, that *vve* maye worke the *vvor*kes of God? Iesus answered, and said vnto them, *this is the vvorke of God, that you beleeue in him, vvhom he hath sent*, heere in steed of all *vvor*kes, Christ places but one, and that is the *vvorke* of beleeuing: a *vvorke* not of the hand, nor of the body, but a *vvorke* of the heart. For as a man must haue a mouing hand, & a stirring body, in the busines that belōgs to this world: so for obtraying of spiritual blessings, he must haue a stirring, and a beleeuing heart: his heart must *vvorke* by faith, if euer he thinke to haue any spirituall blessing from God: for it is by faith alone, that *vve* draw all good things from God in heauen, and by faith alone it is, that *vve* render to God any thing, that can be acceptable vnto him, for all though in the Scriptures,

Scriptures, our actions are attributed to loue: yet they are in this life more properlie attributed to faith: seing that *faith vvorks by loue*: and so loue being but the instrument of faith, and that by vvhich faith vvorketh: and this is the reason vvhy all the doings, and suffrings of the children of God, are attributed vnto faith, as you may see in the 11. of the Lev. for the vvhole operation of a spirituall man, consists maynly in the vvork of belceuing, vvithout which, vve shall neuer receiue ought from God, that is able to saue our soules, neither shall vve be able to doe so much, as to send vp one sound desire, or petition vnto God. To conclud in a vvord, there is no abilitie, either to speake, or to doe, ought, acceptable to God, vvithout faith.

This

This point is of great moment, & we are to Labour about all things, to attaine vnto this worke of beleeuing, and to this end, we are carefully, to vse all meanes, by which it pleaseth God to worke faith in our hearts, as namely, the hearing of the word of God preached, the participation of the Lords supper, instant praier to God, with dayly meditations in the blessed word of God, dayly conference, & talking of the holy things of God, That faith by these meanes be both wrought, and nourished, and dayly increased in our hearts, without which it is impossible, that euer we can come to haue any feeling or sence, either of the life, or loue of God in our soules, much lesse to shewe forth any euidences of them in our practise, to the eyes of men, this is that worke which must

must haue place in all our vvorkes,
& season them all before God, there-
fore are vve commanded, that vvhat-
soeuer vve doe, vvwhether vve eate, or
vvwhether vvee drinke, *that vve doe*
all in the name of the Lord Iesus, which
is as much as to say, that vve doe all
in faith, for nothing can be done in
the name of the Lord Iesus, but it
must of necessitie be done in faith,
this is then that which Christ means,
vvhen he vvills vs to labour.

Nowv let vs goe forvvard: here it
followveth, that vve should next
speake of that, for vvwhich vve should
labour, but before vve come vnto it.
VVe vvill speake first of the prepari-
tion, vvwhich Christ requires in vs, for
the fitting vs to this labour, vvwhich
stands in the remouing of the lets, &
impediments, that hinder vs from la-
bouring for that meat vvwhich indures
vnto

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vnto euerlasting life. And this is set
dovvne in these vvords, *labour not*
for the meat which perishes.

Heere vve see, that vwhen Christ
wils vs to labour for heauenly things:
he first restraines vs from the labour
for earthly things.

The reason is because, that if the
loue, and care of earthly things, be
not rooted out of our mindes, the
loue, and care of heauenly things can
take no place in them: this is mani-
fest by that speach of *Iohn* his 1. *Epist.*
2. cap. 15. vers. *Loue not the vworld,*
nor the things of the vworld', if any
man loue the vworld, the loue of the
Father is not in him. It is a most cer-
taine truth, that that man, vvwhose
heart, & affections is set vpon things
belonging to his body, must be a sen-
celes man, concerning the vvellfare
of his soule. It is expedient therefore,
and

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and also necessarie, that the care, and
solicitude of earthly things bee mo-
derated, and borne downe in our
minds, if euer we will embrace this
labour (commanded by Christ) for
spirituall things, for no man can serue
two Masters, it is impossible to serue
God, and the world both, and it is
for this cause, that Christ wills his
Disciples, *Not to care what they
should eate, nor what they should
drinke, nor what they should put on,*
*but that first they should seeke the
kingdome of God, and his righteousness,*
with a promise, that *all these things
shall be cast vnto them.* And to
remoue them vnto this, among ma-
nie other reasons, he brings this
for one, to wit, that it is the dis-
position, and custome of the hea-
then, and men without God, to
seek after things concerning this life,
namely,

namely, vvhat they ſhould eate, and
vvhat they ſhould drinke, and vvhat
they ſhould put on, and therefore
cōcludes, that they, that knowv God,
and professe God to be their Father, &
ſhould not ſet their hearts vpo theſe
Temporall thing: for it is a vvretched,
and a miserable thing, to ſee a Chri-
ſtian mā's heart diſpoſed, noe better,
then the heart of a prophane heathē,
& that his labour, & trauaile, ſhould
be employed for no higher end, for
no greater, nor better things, then a
blind, & ignorant pagan labours for.
It muſt needs argue a mind, not truly
enlightned as yet, vvith the ſauing
knowledge of ſpiritual things, vvhen
as it can mind nothing elſe but earth-
ly things. And this is the cauſe vvhy
ſo fewv profeſſing Chriſtianitie, doe
maniſeſt any ſtrong deſires, or care-
full ſollicitude. For things eternall,

euen

deuen because they lye yet in darke-
nesse, and ignorance of them, *Not*
rehauing the eyes of their vnderstanding
d, opened, to see the spiritual loy, glory,
r, & felicitie of Gods chosen In Christ:
for if they did once see them, it vvere
d, impossible, that they could esteeme
i- so much of earthly, or transitory plea-
r- sures, but that their hearts vwould be
e, rauished towards heauen, and all
d things in this vworld, vwould be as
or dung in their eyes, for vwhat man is
a there, vvho getting a sight of a prin-
r- cely pallace, full of inestimable trea-
ly sures, and pleasures, vnto the vvich
g he is invited, vvhen hee himselfe
n dvvells in a poore, & miserable cotta-
h- ge, in the mids of a barren wildernes,
y that vwould not gladlie forsake this
de poore cottage, & enioy this princely
e- pallace, and yet there is much more
ll difference, betweene heauen, and
en earth,

earth, the things of this life, and the things of the life to come, the foode of our bodies, and the food of our soules. VVhat vvretched, and miserable fooles are these, vvhich knowing that Heauen is infinitely aboue this earth, and that to liue vvith God is vnspeakeable better, then any estate can be in this life, yet that still their thoughts should be drovned in the cares of this life, and neuer lifted vp to those vnspeakable ioyes, vvhich are at the right hand of God, vvhere Christ is. The point then is this, *Christ vvill haue vs to know, that our hearts must be freed from the cares of this vvorld, before we can set our selues to seeke things, that are spirituall, and heauenly.* Euen as a man, if he vvill transplant a tree, and set it in a better ground, he must first loose

and it from the earth, vvhether in it grow-
neth: and in vvhich it is rooted, for
otherwise, he may vvell breake it,
and destroy it, but transplant it he
cannot: euen so mans heart, that
is rooted in the things of this life,
and naturally set vpon them: it is in-
vaine to thinke, that it can be set
vpon things, that are aboue, vn-
till this stronge hold it hath on
earth be first loosed: for no tree is
so fast rooted in earth, as mans
heart is in earthlie things, and it is
a greater difficultie, to plucke the
thoughts of mans heart from the
care of earthlie things, then to
hauise the deepest tree, that euer
was in the earth, let men there-
fore take this vvarning from Iesus
Christ, that if they vwill seeke
the bread of eternall life, they
must first haue their hearts free,
from

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from the careful seeking of the bread
of this life.

Now let vs come to speake of that
for vvhich vve should labour. There
description vvhich is set dovvne in
these vyorlds [*Labour not for that
meat that perisheeth : but for that
meat vvhich endureth vnto eternall
life.*] In this description, is set dovvn
not only that for vvhich vve should
labour, but a forcible argument, to
moue vs to labour for it : and to dis-
suade vs frō labouring for the other.
this argument is taken from the na-
ture of the meat. For vvhich vve
should not labour, and from the na-
ture of that meat, for vvhich vve
should labour, vvhich shewes then
to be in nature contrarie the one to
the other, and it stands in this, that
the one perisheeth, and the other en-
dureth: so that Christs reason is afte-
th

each his manner, labour not for temporal
meat, because it perisheth: but la-
bour for spirituall meat because it
endureth, Let vs nowv briefly confi-
der these reasons. Touching the first,
that cannot be but a sore vexation to a
mans heart vwhen God giues him
eyes to see it, that of all hee labours
for vnder the sunne, during all the
dayes of his life, ther is nothing of
it, that vwill remaine vvith him, but
it vwill perish and decay: but this is
one of the greatest vanities, & argues
the most miserable corruption of
mans heart vnder the sunne, that ei-
ther they cannot, or they vvil not, see
this, that all things of this vvorld, are
perishing vanities, men naturallic are
giuen to think, that both themselues,
& their substance shall endure long,
and continue for euer, even as the
rich glutton, that pulld dovne his
B barnes,

barnes, and built them bigger, said
vnto his soule, take thine ease, thou
hast goods laid vp for manie yeares:
he neither dreamed of dying him-
selfe, nor of the decaying of his tran-
sitorie substance, & yet poore vvretch
it vvas told him, that to morrov he
should dye: if vvee could therefore
thinke vpon this, that euerie mo-
ment, vvee stand in danger, either to
be taken from the things of this
vvorld, or to haue them taken from
vs: it were impossible, that we should
take such care for vvhat vve should
eate, or vvhat vve should drinke, &c.
yea if vvee vvould, but marke that
vvhich the Apostle speaks to the Col.
concerning the food of our bodies it
vvould be an argument to make vs
lay aside, the sollicitude, and care for
them, seing as the Apostle saith they
perish, euen in the very vsing of thē,
and

and therefore the same Apostle in the
 1. Cor. 7. vills them that marry to be
 as if they married not, and them that
 possessed, as if they possessed not,
Because (saith hee) the fashion, or shape
of this vworld passeth a vway, and all
shall once come to an end: & therefore it
 were happy for vs, if vve could know
 thus much, *that vve are but Pilgrims*
in this vworld, & therefore must vse all
things in it, as Pilgrims vse their lod-
gings, that is not settling vpon them,
 nor resting in them, as though vvee
 could dwell heer for euer: for our ha-
 bitation is prepared for vs in heauen:
 therefore vvee should passe through
 this earth, as the Pilgrims doe their
 iourney, vsing all things in this
 vworld, as trauellers doe to make
 them serue, to further our iourney to
 heauen, and not as clogs to hinder vs,
 seing all that is heere vwill perish.

And yet further to consider this point, mark, howv the Apostle makes it a strong reason, in the *1. Cor. chap. 6. vers. 13.* vvhy men should not eate of any meat vvith offence of their brethren : saying , meat is ordained for the belly, and the belly for meat, and God shall destroy them both , if men had hearts to consider this, what reason could they haue, to be carefull for meat which serues to satisfie their bellie , vvhen both meat, and bellie, shall perish. It is an ydle dreame for men to thinke , that these parts of our bodies, vvich are only giuen for temporall vse, in this life. That I say vvee shall haue any vse of them in heauen , for there vve shall haue no vse of stomacks to digest, or bowvells to make conuayance of our meat, for nourishing these our bodies, seing our bodies in heauen, shalbe
immortall,

immortall, & glorious, like vnto the glorious bodie of the Sonne of God, vwhen therefore vve are feeding our bodies, and satisfying our bellies, it is good for vs to thinke, and remember that vve are feeding that, vvhich ſhal periſh: & that with food which ſhall likevvife periſh, that vve may learne neither to care too much for the bellie, nor for food requiſite vnto it.

Now let vs conſider the argument of the contrarie parte, vvherry Chriſt perſwades vs to labour for ſpirituall meat, in vvhich vve are to obſerue tvvo things:

The firſt is, the nature of this heavenly food in it ſelfe, all though vve neuer do enioy it, vvhich is declared by this [that it endureth.]

The ſecond, is the effect of it in the that get it, vvhich is that it makes the alſo to indure & to liue eternally.

For the first, vvee are to consider, that all the spirituall gifts, that God giues vs in Christ Iesus, are all eternall, and such as shall neuer perish: vvhatsoever God gaue by creation, it might be defaced, and vtterlie vndone: yea, euen the chiefeft gift, that euer vvas giuen in nature to Adam, (vvwhich vvas Gods Image) vvas by Sathan extinguished, and defaced, and as the Scripture tells vs, at the comming of Christ to iudgement, the elements shall melt vvith fire, and the earth, and all the vvorks thereof shall perish, and the heauens shall vvax coud as a garment, and this vvhole vvorld shall come to an end, but the gifts of sauing grace, giuen vs in Christ, can neuer be extinguished, or defaced, for as it is impossible to destroy the Sonne of God himselfe, or that the sorrovv

of

of death, should haue held him vnder them, or that the graue should haue powver to retaine him, so is it impossible, that Christ giuen vnto vs, and his flesh vvhich vve eate, and his blood vvhich vve drinke, or the vertue of them in vs, can euer possible bee defaced in vs, and this is the reason that Christ saith, that his flesh is meat in deed, and his blood is drinke in deed for his flesh is not a perishing meat, nor his blood a decaying drinke, vvhich cannot endure, as the nature of all other meat, and drinke is: but his flesh is euerm-lasting food, and his blood euerm-lasting drinke, and his grace as a well, springing continuallie, to euerm-lasting life, men might thinke, that by the death of our bodies, the vertue of Iesus Christs flesh, and blood, ywere vterlie perished,

but it is not so, they that eate this flesh, and drinke this blood, shall find the vertue of his flesh, & blood, euen vwhen they are rotten in the graue, & by the same powver, vwhere vwith he raysted himselfe from the dead, hee shall likevvise rayse them, from the powver of death, this then is the first thing, vvhich vve are to consider in this food, that it is an enduring meat.

But the next thing is a greater comfort vnto vs, for this is not all the blessednes of this food, and comfort of this argument, to knowv that the flesh and blood of Christ, are in themselves permanent, and eternall, but that vvhich chiefly refresheth our soules is this, to know that vvhosoeuer pertakes of them, shal pertake of eternall life vwith them, this is a blessed thing in deed, vwhen I knowv, that

that not only the things vvhwhereof I
am made pertaker are eternall, but
that I my selfe, by pertaking of them
shall be eternall as vvell as they.
VVhat can moue a man to seeke this
meat, if this doe it not? vvhhen vvee
vnderstand that it hath this povver
to vvork such a blessed effecte in him
that is pertaker of it, It is vndoubted-
lie, the miserable ignorance of (this
benefit, vvwhich comes by the flesh,
& blood, of Christ,) that makes men
so careles to enioy them, there is no-
thing in the vvorld, that a man more
desires then to liue for euer, all that
euer a man hath he vvill giue for his
life, that he may not see death, but as
Dauid saith in the 49. *Psal.* *No man
can by any means redeeme his brother,
nor giue to God a ransome, that he
should liue for euer.* Indeed it is no
temporall thing, that can procure
B, eternall

eternal life, no not all the means that
can be diuised, eate vvhata man can
eate, & drink vvhata man can drink,
yet he shal dye, but heere is the com-
fort of a Christian, that frō Christ, he
is fed vwith that meat, that shal make
him to liue for euer: in such sorte, that
the gates of hel shal not preuaile against
him, neither death nor the graue shal
haue pouer ouer him, but he shal
haue a glorious triumph ouer them
both, so as he shal sing that ioyfull
song, *o death, where is thy sting, o graue,*
vvhere is the victory? And this is no
vvōder, seing the causes of this life are
eternall, it cannot be but that the life
that flowveth frō them must be eter-
nall, and they that are fed vwith him
must needs liue eternally, for all that
we receaue from Christ, is eternal, the
peace eternall, the ioy, & life eternall,
& this is that vvherewith Christ com-
forts

To the Lords Table.

35

fortshis disciples, *Iohn* 16. 22. saying,
Your ioy shall no man take from you:
Thus a child of God in the midst of
all his troubles, & in the midst of the
valley of the shadow of death, will
feare no euill, but can still reioyce in
God his sauiour. O how should this
stir vp our hearts, to seeke after this
meat, euē as the vvoman of Samaria,
in the 4. of *Iohn*. the 15. vvhen Christ
told her of vvater vvhich he had to
giue, vvhich vvhosoeuer did drink of
I should neuer be more a thirst, she
said, *Lord, giue me of that vvater, that*
I may not thirst any more, nor come he-
ther to draw. Likevvise the levvies in
this same chapter, vvhen Christ told
them, that the bread of God giues
life to the vvorld, they said vnto
Christ, *Lord giue vs euer more of this*
bread: euen so vvhen vve heare, that
they that eate the flesh, and drinke
the

the blood of Christ, shall liue eternallie. Should vvee not in our hearts desire it, and beg of Christ to make vs partakers of it, and earnestly long to enioy it: surely it must needs be a most lust thing vwith God to poure dovyne heauie iudgment vpon this fenceles age, and sinfull generation of men, vvho take greater pleasure to seeke after the stinking delights of this flesh, and to vvallovv in their beastly lusts, then to enioy this blessed bread, that endures to everlasting life: for it is impossible for any man to haue perpetuitie of being vvithout this, vvhen therefore vvee see other men to call their lands by their names, so to perpetuate their names on earth: let vs not follovv their foolish footsteps, but if vve desire to liue for euer, let vs labour for this meat, vvwhich endures to eternall life, and thus

thus much for the reason, cōtayning also a discription of that, for vvhich vvee should labour.

Seeing then vvee see vvhath great reason, vvee haue to seeke this spiri-
tuall food, it is necessarie for vs to
know vvhether vvee shall find it, and
that is the next point vve are to con-
sider; set dovvne in these vvords,
[*vvhich the sonne of man shall giue
vnto you.*] In these vvords, let vs
marke these two things: First vvho
it is, of vvhom vvee must haue this
meat: That is the Sonne of man: The
second is, how vve shall haue it, and
that is set dovvne in these vvords, he
shall giue it vnto vs.

Touching the first, vvee are to
mark, that it pleaseth Christ through
out the Scriptures, to name himselfe
more by this name (the Sonne of
man) then by any other, especiallie
vvhen

vwhen he speaks of the vvorks of fa-
uing grace : and for the comfort of
his elect ones : it must therefore be
a matter of great moment , and of
singular instruction for vs , that mo-
ues Christ to take this name vpon
himselſe , and certainly it is ſo , al-
though not perceaued , nor compre-
hended , by euerie man. In this
ſame chapter vwhen Chriſt had told
the Iewes , that *vntles they did eate
the fleſh of the Sonne of man , and
drinke his blood , they had no life in
them , many of his diſciples murmured
at it , and ſaid , this is a hard ſaying ,*
and in deed no maruell , that it ſeeme
hard to a naturall man , for how can
he thinke , that the fleſh , and blood
of man , ſhould haue the vertue of
eternall life in them , but Chriſt
opens this miſtery in the ſame place ,
telling them that it vvvas *the ſpirit*
that

To the Lords Table.

39

that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: for it is true, that all though vvithout this flesh and blood, vve can haue no life in vs, yet certainly euen the flesh and blood of Christ, nakedly considered, as flesh and blood, or yet, as the flesh and blood of a man, could neuer giue life to them, that eate and drinke it, but as being the flesh, and blood of God, in the vvhich flesh, all the fullnes of the God-head dvvels bodily, it is no maruell that it giues life to them, that eate and drinke them, for as much as the eternal spirit is neuer separated from this flesh, nor from this blood, & therefore all though their can be no eternall life, but frō this eternal spirit, yet it is the pleasure of God, that no sa- uing vertue of the Diety, nor life frō the God head should euer be cōmu- nicated ynto man, but in, & through
the

the flesh, and blood of Iesus Christ the Lord: Let no man therefore Dis-
pise this flesh, & blood, nor the out-
ward means, vvh whereby our fellow-
ship, and communion, in this flesh,
and blood is sealed vnto vs, since
vwithout this flesh, and blood, it is
not the purpose of God to saue vs, let
vs therefore lay vp this misterie in
our hearts, that as the flesh of Christ
can neuer quicken, but by the spirit,
euen so also the spirit shall neuer
quicken but by the flesh.

There is yet more in this to be con-
sidered, and that is, that as God vwill
dispen- no sauing grace, but in the
flesh, and blood, of Iesus Christ the
man, so he vwill not dispen- it, but
by Christ as hee is man, for God hath
giuen all iudgment to the Sonne, not
as hee is God simplie, but as he is the
Sonne of man, and by him as hee is
man,

To the Lords Table.

41

ft man, vwill he iudge the vworld, as the
c. Apostle saith in the 17. of *Act.* God
t. hath appointed a day, in which he vwill
y. iudge the vworld in righteousness, by the
n, man vvhom he hath ordained. Iesus
e Christ, as man, shall iudge both hea-
is uen, and earth. For the Father hath
er exalted him in his man hood, and
n hath giuen him a name, aboue all
ft names vnto vvhich all knees must
, bowe, and euerie mouth confesseth
r him, to be the Lord, therefore it is
not vwithout cause, that Dauid con-
sidering this vvondered, as you may
see in the 8. psal. saying: *VWhat is*
e man, that thou art mindfull of him, and
e the sonne of man, that thou visitest
him, for thou hast made him a littel
louer then the Angels, and hast crow-
ned him vvith honour, and glorie, and
hath put all things vnder his feet: It is
good for vs to consider this, that as
Christ

Christ himfelfe faith, all powver is giuen vnto mee, ouer all flesh, theed powver of ruling, and of iudging, offering, & damning men, is giuen to Christ as man, for there is nothing, that is not subdued vnto Christ the man, as the Apostle proues in the 1. Cor. 15. from these vvords of the Psalme : *that God hath subdued all things vnder his feet*, prouing thereby: that it is manifest, that nothing is vnsubdued to him, but he that did subdue them, vntill that the last enemy death it selfe be subdued, Christ shall full possesse the kingdome, but vwhen hee hath subdued all things, then shall he render vp the kingdome to his father, that God may be all in all: but in the meane time till this be done, all powver is giuen to Christ as man, to destroy all aduersarie powers, either diuells or vvicked men, thus

hath

isath God honoured, & highly exal-
need the humanitie of his Sonne, by
offerue of the fullnes of the God head
olvvelling in him bodilie, this is the
g, eason that Christ in this place saith,
e the Sonne of man shall giue vs this
e read of eternall life.

e The consideration of these things,
llerue for a singular cōfort to the God-
y: & a fearefull terror to the vvicked.

- Touching the vvicked, vvhen they
o- must see, & knowv this, that the man
e whom they haue pearced, and put to
ll eath, vvhom they haue so despised
n whose blood, they haue trod vnder
n pote, to be exalted to such glorie, and
o vvhen they shal see him come in the
: clouds, in maiestie, and great povver,
e accompanied vvith innumerable an-
s, gells, and hearing (him sitting in the
, hrone of iudgmēt) prononce the sen-
s en: ce of eternall death against them.

For

44 *A Preparatiue Sermon,*

For the Godly it is a matter of singular ioy, to know, that he shall be their iudge, and that in his humane nature, vvherein in all things hee vvas made like vnto them, sinne only excepted, and vvherein he vvrought their redemption by his ovvn death, & vvhether they shall vnderstand, that the dispensation of all things is put in his hands, and that he hath power to giue eternall life, yea he himselfe to giue his ovvne flesh, and blood vnto vs, vnto eternall life, certainly if this vv ere not, the greatest comfort of Gods elect vv ere taken avvaie, no consideration of the Sonne of God, as God simplie, could possibly refresh our soules, if vvee did not consider him in his flesh, being man, for he is no lesse terrible in his Dyetic to a sinner, then the Father: but our interest in him ariseth vpon this, that hee

in ~~hee~~ is be come our brother in our
nature, that being man, hee might
bring vs that are men to God. There-
fore first of all he did a base himselfe,
and tooke vpon him the shape of a
seruant, and in that nature hath
wrought our eternall redemption,
and did glorifie himselfe in that same
flesh, vwith that glorie, that he had
with the Father, before the world
was, all to this end, that he might
aduance vs to the same dignitie vwith
himselfe: for though as God he had
power sufficientlie to saue vs, yet vve
had neuer bene pertakers of it, if he
had not prepared the vway by his
flesh to communicate it vwith man:
and if Christ himselfe in our nature,
had not taken possessiō of the glorie,
and kingdome of God: it had bene
impossible for any other man, euer
to haue come to the participation of
that

that glorie or kingdome, and thus
much for the first point, that is of
him, from vyhom we must haue this
bread.

Nowv, let vs come to the manner
hovv vve shall get it, and that is set
dovvne in the words (*he shall giue
it vnto you*) A man might thinke by
the former vvords of Christ, vvhen
he vvills vs to labour for it, that
man himselfe by labour vvere the
purchaser of it? but it is not so, let
a man doe vvhat he can, he is still
vnnvorthie of it, yet not vvithstan-
ding Christ vvill haue vs to knowv,
that the man that seeks for it shall
get it, though neither hee nor his
labour be vvorthie of it: Christ re-
quires no more of thee but to seeke
for it, and he vvill freely giue it, thou
canst haue nothing vvherevvith to
buy it, and therefore the Lord calls

vpon

upon euery one that thirsts to come,
and drinke freely, they may haue it
without siluer, or without any
price: seeing they can haue it for the
seeking only. O how iustly shall
these vretches be damned, that will
take no paines to beg, or seeke for it,
of all things in the world, this shall
be one of the chiefest that shal gnaw
the hearts of men most miserable,
when they shall see themselves eter-
nally damned, because they neuer
sought after life in Christ, but when
they should haue sought for it, they
gaue themselves to seeke their plea-
sures, & did loue rather to hunt after
a vvhore, and their beastly lusts then
after Christ the Son of God, & Sau-
our of the world, mark Christs speech
John 5. *You will not come vnto me,*
saieth Christ, that I might giue you eter-
nal life: he desires no more of them,
but

but that they vwill come to him, and he vwill giue them life. Alas! how many is there vwho vwhen Christ doth call vpon them, and couer his table vnto them, and offer his flesh that vvas broken for them, and his blood, that vvas shed for the remission of their sinnes, vwho not vwithstanding vwill not come at all, vnto the blessed Table of the Lord: I halfeuer Christ thinke these men vvorthie of eternall life, that vwhen they may haue the food of it for coming vnto it, doe not vwithstanding neglect it. If vve did but see our miserie, and our vvretched estate in sinne, vnder Gods vvraeth, then vve vwould make great account of that vvee dispise, and our hearts vwould smite vs for our contempt of that, vwithout vwhich there is no life to our soules, that is the only bread vwhich brings

brings eternall life to our soules. O
vwhat vertue, vwhat comfort, vwhat
life, and efficacie vnto life, shall vve
find in that flesh, and in that blood,
if vve did truly embrace it, & receiue
it from Christ, certainly many thou-
sands deprive themselves of all ioy,
and true consolation in Christ, only
because they vwill not paine them-
selves to seeke it. Iames vpbraids
men in his time, not only because
they asked amisse, but he tells them,
they got nothing, because they asked
not, and the same Iames shewes vs,
that if a man doe aske, he shall receaue,
when he saith, *If any man lack wisdom*
let him aske of God, that giues liberally
to all, and Christ confirms the same
in the Gospel, vwhen he bids vs, *aske,*
& vve shall haue, seeke, & vve shall
find, their damnatiō then must needs
be iust that neuer sought after Christ.

50 *A Preparatiue Sermon,*

Nowv the last point, vvhich vve are to knowve, is concerning the ground of all our assurance, that vvee shall get this bread, vvhich endures vnto eternall life from Christ, & that is set dovvne in these vvords, [*For him hath God the Father sealed.*]

These vvords comprehend a matter of chiefe moment for our consideration, for if this vv ere not, all the knowvledge of Christ vv ere but small comforte, to a poore sinfull soule, but this it is that giues vs ioy, in the contemplation of Christ crucified, that vve knowv, that God the Father hath sealed him.

To consider this place therefore a right, vvee are to knowv, that it is taken from the custome of men, vvho vvhen they vvill haue any thing to be made sure, and sted-fast, and vvhen they vvill make it to haue

to the Lords Table.

51

have authoritie, and strength, they are accustomed to adde their seale to it, to confirme it, by vvhich vvhatsocuer is promised, is made more stronge: so God by this sorte of speech doth shew vs, that not only, he hath giuen Christ to be our Sauour according, as hee declares in his VVord, and that hee is that Lambe of God, that takes away the sinnes of the vworld, and that hee hath not only reconciled all things, by the blood of his crosse, but also to make all things sure, and firme, that vvee might neuer call this into question, hee hath ratified all this, by adding his seale vnto it.

Out of this, vve are first to learne: *That the naked knowledg, and consideration of Christ, and vvhath God hath made him vnto vs, is not sufficient*

*to saluation , except vve know , that
God the Father hath sealed Christ to be
all in all vnto vs , that hee hath pro-
mised , and vvhich he hath made him
to be , vvhcreby I may be confirmed ,
that vvhatsocuer God saith , Christ
is , or vvhatsocuer God is said to haue
made him for mee , is vndoubtedly
so , here vve may se , that in our minds
vve must ascend higher then Christ
himselſe , or the promise of God in
him , to seeke the chiefeſt ground , or
ſtay of our faith , vvhich althougħ
it can haue no ground vwithout
Christ , and vwithout the promise ,
yet neither the promise , nor Christ
(in vvhom the promise is yea , and
amen) could be any ſure ground of
life , & ſaluation to me vnleſſe both
came from this , and vvere ſtamped
vwith this ſcale of the Father in
Christ , for all though , that Christs
Aeſh*

flesh be said to giue life to those, that are pertakers of it : yet the ground, and reason of this stands in this, that the Father hath sealed him in his flesh to be the life of the vworld, so that without knowvledge of this, our hope and faith vvere vaine.

Let vs therefore come to consider this seale of God. First in generall, vve knowv that a seale vwhen it is applied doth leaue the impression of it selfe, most liuely in the vvax vvhere into it is set, so that all the forme, the shape, and marks, that are in the seale are liuely imprinted in the vvax, thus hath God the Father dealt vvith his Sonne, for there is no promise of mercy, of grace, of holines of life, or glorie, vvwhich God hath made in Christ to sinners, but he hath stamped the same in Christ the man, so that euerie man that sees the flesh of

Christ, vvith true spirituall eies, may see that his flesh, is stamp't vvith righteousness, vvith the life of God, and vvith immortall peace, & euerlasting glory. But to come nearer to the consideration of this seale, it is true, that many men run to his Diety, to find this seale, and that because it is said in the first of the *Hebrewes* concerning Christ, *that hee is the brightnes of the glorie, and the expresse, or ingrauen image of the Fathers person*, for vvhich cause it is said, *that he that sees the Sonne, sees also the Father*: but notwithstanding all this, if the Sonne of God had bene sealed by the Father, only in his diuine nature, as he is the second person of the trinitie, & that this seale of God had neuer reached from his God head, to his humanity, his flesh could neuer haue bene the bread of life, therefore we must labour
to

to see this seale of God, ingrauen in Christ the man, else howv can vve knowv, that by eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, vve haue eternall life, since vvith out this seale, his flesh, and blood could haue no more force, to giue life, then any other flesh, or blood, of any other man: therfore let vs consider, vvherin this sealing of the Son, as he is man cōsists.

This seale hath fiue speciall things in it, to be considered.

The first is Gods eternall ordinatiō, & appointmēt, wherby he did ordaine Christ the man, and none but Christ the man, to be the food of our soules, to be the mediator betvvene God, & vs, & so to be the only King, Priest & Prophet, of Gods house for euer, by vertue of this appointment of God, Christ comes to bee, that to vs, that hee is, and this eternall decree

of God, concerning Christ in his flesh, to bee our redeemer, is made manifest in the Scripture, vwhen it is told vs, *that God ordained him before the world vvas*, in the 1. of Peter the 1. chap. and againe vwhere it is said, *that there is not a name giuen vnder heauen, by vvhich a man can be saued, but the name of Iesus only*, and this is ratified in the Scripture, by the testimonie, both of God himselte, and Iohn Baptist, and of the Apostle. The Father from heauen did vvitness so much, vwhen as he said, *this is my vvell beloued Sonne, in vvhom I am vvell pleased*, there by declaring, that in Iesus Christ the Sonne, (now made man) his vvrath tovvards vs, vvas taken avvay: and he vvell pleased vvith vs, not vvithstanding our manifold sinnes, committed against him, and all those speeches of God, vvhence-

vwhereby God ratifies, that Christ the man, is his Sonne, saying, *thou art my Sonne, this day haue I be gotten thee,* & vwhere by he confirms him, to be our euerlasting Priest, for euer, *after the order of Melchisedeke*, and vwhereby hee vvitnesses him to be made Lord of his church, saying, *the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, till I make thine ennemies thy footstoole*, all these do make manifest the truth of this point, that it is Christ the man, vvhom God hath decreed to be, both the Author, and matter of our saluation. And this is the first part of this seale of God, this knowvledge, that God hath ordained him only, and none but him, to be the bread of life.

The second part of Gods seale, vwhere by he hath sealed Christ the man, appears in the vvorks of Gods

C,

ovvne

ovvne power, which the Father gaue him to doe, as in raising the dead, commanding of the seas, and tempests, the restoring sight to the blind, curing of all diseases, yea, and commanding the very diuels, &c. therefore it is that Christ saith in the 5. of Iohn vers. 6. after this manner, *The vvorkes vvhich the Father hath giuen me to finish, the same vvorkes that I doe beare vvitnes, that the Father sent me, & the Father himselfe, vvhich hath sent mee beares vvitnes of mee, and againe in the 10. of Iohn vers. 25 If I doe not the vvorkes of my Father beleeue me not: But if I doe them, though you beleeue not me, yet beleeue the vvorkes, that you may knowv, that the Father is in me, and I in him, vers. 37. 38.* These vvorkes vvhich none could doe but God himselfe, being done by Christ the man, are the second part of Gods scale, vvhereby

vvhereby God the Father doth let vs see, that this man *Iesus*, is hee alone of vvhom vvee all must looke for life.

The third parte of this scale consists in this, that God the Father hath laid vpon Christ the man, the chastisements of our peace, that by his stripes vvee might be healed, for by inflicting vpon him in his flesh, all the punishments, and vvraith of God, vvwhich vvee by our iniquities haue deserued, hee thereby sealed his manhood to be the food of life, making him as a Lambe roasted vvith fire for our food. And for this cause, it is said of Christ (*Hebr. the 5. and the 9.*) *That he being consecrated, vvvas made the Author of eternall saluation vnto all them, that obay him: for vvhen God did take vengeance vpon Christ his Sonne for our iniquities,*
he

he made him sinne for vs, that vvee might be made the righteousness of God in him: and by his crosse, killed hatred, and brought in euerlasting peace, therefore in as much as it is hee alone, that hath vndergone the curse of the lawe, and the vvrath of God for vs that are sinners: it is manifest, that God giues none to be the bread of life to our soules, but him alone, and this is the reason, vvhy the Apostle to correct that great schisme, in the church of Corinth: vvhen one said he vvas Pauls, another Apollos, &c. and to force them all, to acknowledge none but Christ for their Sauiour, he vses this forme of argument, vvas Paul crucified for you? &c. as if he vvould say none but he vvho is crucified for you, are you to depend vpon for life, and saluation: and the same is the reason, vvhy the same Apostles

Apostle vwriting to the Corinth: the first Epist. chapt. 2. saith, *that he did determinate to know nothing among them but Iesus Christ, and him crucified,* and againe he saith in the 6. of Gal vers 14. *God forbid, that I should reioyce, but in the crosse of our Lord Iesus Christ.*

The fourth part of this seale standeth in this, that God the Father hath raised Christ Iesus his sonne from the dead, and hath taken him out of the powver of the graue, and hath set him at his right hand in heauen, and crownded him with glorie, and honour, making him the head of men, and Angels giuing him all powver in heauen, and in earth, and aboue all, giuing him to be the head of his church, thus setting him in that flesh, wherein he vvrought our redemption, and suffered the chastisement
of

of our peace, in the full possession of the kingdom, life, and glorie, vvhich hee hath purchased vnto vs, filling him in that his man-hood, vvithall fullnes of grace, and glorie, that out of his fullnes, vvee might dravv grace, so fitting this his flesh thus glorified, to be the effectuall means of communicating life, and glorie vnto vs in our flesh, and for this cause it is, that the Apostle doth proue, that God shall iudge the vvorld by Christ the man, by this argument, to vvit, because God had raised him vp from the dead, Acts. 17. 31. and the Apostle: for this cause, makes this the chiefe point of the knowledg of Iesus Christ, to vvit, *that vve haue such a high Priest, that sitteth at the right hand of the throne of the maiestie, in heauen: Hebrewes the 8. and the 1.*

for

for allthough hee had beene man,
and in mans nature had suffered all
punishments due to vs, for our ini-
quities, yet not vwithstanding if he
had neuer beene raised from the
dead, and triumphed ouer the graue,
vve could neuer haue hoped, to
haue attained to eternall life by his
flesh, for if that flesh of his, had
beene ouercome by death, vve could
neuer haue ouercome death, in
our flesh, therefore it is, that the
Apostle builds our hope of life, vpon
the resurrection of Christ from the
dead: 1. Pet. chapt. 1. vers. 3. saying,
*Blessed be the God and Father of our
Lord Iesus Christ, who according
to his abundant mercie, hath be-
gotten vs againe to the hope of life,
by the resurrection of Iesus Christ
from the dead: And againe in*
the

the same chapter vers. the 21. he saith thus, *that God raised him from the dead, and gaue him glorie, that our faith, and hope might be in God, and this is the fourth part of this seale.*

The 5. and last part of this seale, vvhich is the ground, and foundation of the rest, is this: *That this man in his flesh is not only by Gods eternall decree appointed, and by the Fathers voyce from heauen ratified, to be the only redeemer, and life of the vworld, and confirmed to be this, by his vvorks, his sufferings, and his glorious exaltation, at the right hand of God, but chiefly, and principally, because in this his manhood, thus abased, and againe exalted, doth dwell all the fullnes of the God head bodily, Colos. the vers 2. 9. for if this vvere not, all the former part of this seale vvere not sufficient to make his flesh the bread of life, for immortality*

life

To the Lords Table.

65

life cannot come to vs, but from that
flesh, vvhich hath immortall life
in it selfe, and this is the reason that
Christ vses that speech, in the 6. of
Iohn, vvhhen he vvould proue, that
he that eats his flesh, and drinks his
blood hath euerlasting life, saying,
*as that lining Father hath sent me, and
I liue by the Father, euen so hee that
eats my flesh, euen he shall liue by me,*
in the 57. vers. this therefore is the
greatest parte, of this scale vvhere-
vvith God the Father hath sealed
Christ the man: to vvitt that he hath
stamped the flesh of Christ vvith
the Diety it selfe, and so consequent-
ly vvith life it selfe: it is no vvonder
therefore, that this flesh, and this
blood do giue life to those, that eate
and drinke it, seeing it is the flesh,
and blood of God himselfe, therefore
it is said in the 20. of Acts. vers. 28.
that

A preparatiue Sermon,
that God hath purchased his church by
his owne blood : no man therefore
that is not a most vretched infidell
can deny, that this flesh and blood
of Christ, is able to giue eternall life
to him that doth receaue it, and this
point is carefully to be marked of vs,
because the Apostle in the 1. Corint.
the 11. chapt. shewing the reason
why the Corinthians in eating the Lords
supper, did eate vnvvorthily, yea did
eate iudgment vnto themselves, doth
plainely shew vs that it consisted in
this, *that they did not discerne the*
Lords body, vers. the 29. for the ban-
quet of the Lords supper, is not a
bāquet of the flesh of a meere man:
but it is of the flesh and blood, of
the euerlasting King, and Lord, of
heauen and earth, euen of the eter-
nall God himselfe, and therefore no
maruell, that all those, vwho eating
it,

To the Lords Table.

67

It, & not discerning it so, are counted
guiltie of the body and blood of the
Lord. V Vee see then, vvhat com-
fort vvee haue in the consideration
of this point, to vvit, that God the
Father hath sealed Christ the man,
to be the bread of eternall life, to all
that eate his flesh, giuing vs full
assurance heere by in all the testimo-
nies, vvich he hath giuen of him,
and all the vvorks vvich hee hath
vvrought by him, and all that hee
hath effected in his humanity, and in
that he hath made his humanity, the
euerlasting tabernacle of the God-
head, that novv vvee need no more
doubte, but that hee it is, vvho not
only is vvilling, but also able to giue
vs that food, that endures to eternall
life. therefore let vs come with bould-
nes, and chearefullnes, and labour to
be

68 *A preparatiue Sermon, to the &c.*
be partakers of this flesh and blood
of the Sonne of God, vvhich if vve
receaue as vve ought, vve may
be sure our soules shall
neuer perissh.

F I N I S.

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